

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

SAB-02 CU-04 IO-13 EB-08 COME-00 TRSE-00 AID-05

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FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6252

INFO PANCANAL

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PBOR, PN

SUBJECT: NATIVES GETTING RESTLESS

REF: A. PANAMA 1806 B. PANAMA 1822

1. THE FEDERATION OF PANAMANIAN STUDENTS (FEP) HAS CONDEMNED THE SENATE'S AMENDMENTS TO THE PANAMA CANAL NEUTRALITY TREATY, BUT HAS RESERVED SOME OF ITS IRE FOR GOP HANDLING OF THE AMENDMENTS ISSUE.

2. AS A RESULT OF A MARCH 21 MEETING, THE LEFTIST, GOVERNMENT-FUNDED FEP, PANAMA'S LARGEST STUDENT ORGANIZATION, YESTERDAY ISSUED A COMMUNIQUE IMPLYING THAT THEY HAVE HAD TO RESIST "PRESSURE AND BLACKMAIL" IN ORDER TO "BRAVELY RECEIVE THE RESERVATIONS MADE BY THE U.S. SENATE WITH INDIGNATION." THE FEP DEMANDED THE PUBLICATION OF THE COMPLETE TEXTS OF THE AMENDMENTS, WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN PUBLICIZED OR MADE READILY AVAILABLE HERE. THEY ALSO CALLED FOR UNITY TO SEARCH FOR "ALTERNATIVES OF STRUGGLE" TO REJECT IMPERIALIST CAMPAIGNS. WITH A HINT OF FORCED RESTRAINT, THE STUDENTS

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TERMED THE POSTPONEMENT OF THE BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR (REPORTED REF B) AN "UNTIMELY DECISION THAT ONLY SERVES TO STOP THE NATIONAL LIBERATION PROCESS." THE DECISION WAS A "SURPRISE" TO THEM -- THEY HEARD ABOUT IT IN THE NEWS -- AS THE FEP LEADERSHIP HAD NOT BEEN CONSULTED.

3. THE NATIONAL COORDINATOR OF DEMOCRATIC TEACHERS HAS ALSO CRITICIZED THE DECISION TO POSTPONE THE OPENING OF SCHOOL, STATING THAT THE DECISION "DEMOBILIZES" THE PEOPLE AT A TIME WHEN "PATRIOTIC ALERTNESS AND MILITANCY ARE NEEDED TO CONFRONT THE OLIGARCHY AND IMPERIALISM." THE COORDINATOR REJECTED THE "AMENDMENTS AGAINST PANAMA AND THE STRUGGLE HEADED BY GENERAL TORRIJOS."

4. COMMENT: THAT THE STUDENTS ARE UNHAPPY WITH THE SENATE'S AMENDMENTS AND RESERVATIONS IS NOT SURPRISING. THAT THE FEP IS CRITICAL OF GOP SILENCE ON THE AMENDMENTS AND OF THE DECISION TO DELAY SCHOOL OPENING IS MORE DISQUIETING. IT SUGGESTS THAT THE GOVERNMENT MAY NOT BE ABLE TO KEEP THE FEP IN LINE IF IT EVENTUALLY DECIDES TO TRY TO SWALLOW THE AMENDMENTS. OTHER SOURCES INDICATE THAT THE FEP FEELS THE GOVERNMENT HAS IMPOSED THE REIGN OF SILENCE BECAUSE IT CONSIDERS THE FEB MEMBERSHIP, HERETOFORE LOYAL TO GOVERNMENT CAUSES, TOO YOUNG AND IMMATURE TO BE TAKEN INTO ITS CONFIDENCE ON SENSITIVE TREATY MATTERS.

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Message Attributes

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